

EPA Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot

Lancaster County, PA

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5105)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to assess brownfields sites and to test cleanup and redevelopment models; job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, cleanup revolving loan fund programs (each funded up to \$500,000 over five years) to capitalize loan funds to make loans for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

BACKGROUND

EPA has selected Lancaster County for a Brownfields Pilot. The county was also selected to receive additional funding for assessments at brownfields properties to be used for greenspace purposes. Lancaster County (population 450,834) is a place marked by a unique blend of resources and distinctive cultures. It is home to fertile farmland and Amish and the Mennonite religious communities. It possesses both rural and urban attributes, supporting a vital agricultural industry as well as a fairly large manufacturing sector. Lancaster County houses 843 manufacturing firms, which employ 30 percent of the workforce.

Lancaster County is one of the fastest growing counties in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in terms of population and employment. While the county has experienced economic growth, not all of the communities have shared in the benefits. Older, developed, urban areas have not attracted new development and have lost their existing economic bases as businesses and industries have relocated into suburban areas. As a result, these areas are host to numerous vacant or underutilized industrial/commercial lots and abandoned manufacturing/commercial facilities with real or perceived environmental hazards.

PILOT SNAPSHOT



Lancaster County, PA

Date of Announcement:
May 2000

Amount: \$200,000
Greenspace: \$50,000

Profile: The Pilot targets 2 to 10 brownfields in older, developed, urban areas of Lancaster County and three other brownfields for proposed greenway areas.

Contacts:

Lancaster County
(717) 299-8300

Regional Brownfields Team
U.S. EPA - Region 3
(215) 814-3129

Visit the EPA Region 3 Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/reg3hwmdbrownfld/hmpage1.htm>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

The Pilot will target its greenspace efforts at three potential greenway projects located in some of the county's more urban areas—the boroughs of Ephrata, Columbia, and Manheim and the townships of West Hempfield and Penn. Many of these proposed greenways follow rights-of-way of abandoned or underutilized railroad lines, while others pass through currently underutilized, potentially contaminated property. They are located in areas of ethnic diversity and poverty that have witnessed disinvestment while Lancaster County has grown as a whole.

OBJECTIVES

Lancaster County's goal is to stimulate private sector investment in the redevelopment of vacant parcels within its urban communities by removing environmental obstacles and clarifying legal issues. Lancaster also aims to bring recreational, economic, and transportation advantages to the surrounding communities by developing greenways. These goals will be achieved by developing partnerships, gathering and sharing information, soliciting input from all stakeholders, reviewing existing data, assessing individual sites, formulating redevelopment plans, structuring redevelopment projects, and providing limited financial assistance.

The County will use the greenspace funding to implement some of the greenway projects recommended in its Parks and Open Space Plan. The Pilot will fund Phase I assessments at the three targeted brownfields and a Phase II assessment and reuse study for one of the sites. The end result of the Pilot's greenspace efforts will be an improved system of greenways throughout the county.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Activities planned as part of this Pilot include:

- Gathering background information on known brownfields, developing criteria to prioritize the sites, and targeting 2 to 10 brownfields for further assistance;
- Conducting sites assessments on the targeted sites in order of their priority status;
- Developing site cleanup and redevelopment strategies for the targeted sites, within the context of community-based goals and strategies;
- Conducting Phase I site assessments at all three greenway project sites;
- Conducting a Phase II site assessment and performing a reuse study at one of the greenway project sites;
- Conducting community outreach regarding the targeted brownfields; and
- Developing benchmarks to measure the progress of brownfields reuse.

The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.